



# Mail

## Author's response

To the editor,  
I thank Jay Davis for his interest in my article.

He takes issue with my statement on rape and states that "rape is not violence masquerading as sex. Rape is violence used to gain sexual gratification."

His definition covers some cases, but it is too narrow, because sexual gratification is not the only drive. You have only to consider the issues of power and domination involved with homosexual rape in prisons or with rape in war, such as the rape of the defeated in the Balkans as part of a policy of ethnic domination, to realize that rape has a wider definition.

We both agree, however, that means must be found to reduce the prevalence of rape. This should include primary prevention, as well as improving the reporting, prosecution, and conviction rate of rapists. The rapist, and the victim, both need counseling and rehabilitation.

According to the National Institute of Justice, rape, apart from its personal and social consequences, is the costliest crime in the United States. With annual victim costs totaling \$127 billion, it "exact[s] a higher price than murder."<sup>1</sup>

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### Reference

- 1 Travis J. The Extent and Cost of Crime Victimization. National Institute of Justice Research Preview, January 1996. Available at: [www.ncjrs.org/pdffiles/costcrim.pdf](http://www.ncjrs.org/pdffiles/costcrim.pdf). Accessed July 9, 2001.